

CHAPTER VI FROM
THE CELL TO THE WORLD

" Quscando mis amores, Ir&
por esos monies y riberas, Nl
cogerl las flores, Nl temerf
laa fieras, Y paeard los
fuertea y froateras."

San Juan de la Cruz, *Condonos entre el Alma y
el Esfoso.*

THESE were stormy days for Siena. Plots against the supremacy of the Riformatori were incessant, and the government retaliated by torture and executions. At the beginning of 1371, a conspiracy was discovered, and two culprits were sentenced to be *attanagliati*, that is, torn by hot pincers on a cart all through the city to the place of execution. Catherine was in the house of Alessa, when the dreadful pageant passed through the street below ; at her prayers, the horrible shrieks and despairing blasphemies of the condemned men were hushed at a vision of Christ that came to meet them at the gate of the city, " and they went to death as joyously as though they were invited to a banquet."

In the July of this year, a formidable rising of the *Compagnia del Bruco*, a secret association of the wool-carders, who were subjected to the Guild of Wool, and forbidden the right of combination, shook for a moment the whole fabric of the State. It was a curious anticipation of the tumult of the *Ciompi* in Florence, seven years later. For several days the insurgents held the city at their mercy, and compelled the government to put seven of their own number into the Signoria. This was followed by a counter conspiracy of the Dodicini and their allies, with the connivance of the Captain of the People, Francesco di Naddo, supported by the Salimbeni. There was a sanguinary massacre in the Costa d'O-vile on July 30 ; but, in spite of the defection of their chiefs, the armed companies of the city kept loyal to the government, and, with the aid of the Noveschi and nobles, the rising was crushed. The Captain of the People, robed in scarlet, was beheaded on a